

IDRC FINAL REPORT

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SYNTHESIS

This project aims to support the generation of evidence to improve and expand employment-driven training for underprivileged youth in Egypt. It will focus on three pre-determined growing sectors in Egypt – retail, IT/BPO, and hospitality.

The project has been led by Education For Employment (EFE-Egypt) and the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), which have maintained close communication throughout the previous years to continue project implementation as set up in the initial strategy and to adapt the work plan accordingly when necessary. The Market Skills and Competencies study has been completed in all three sectors; retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO. EFE-Egypt has collaborated with J-PAL throughout this period in designing variation reiterations of curricula for the hospitality sector and IT/BPO.

EFE-Egypt has experienced significant delays in launching programs for the hospitality sector due to challenges in participant sourcing. Consequently, a collective decision has been made to move forward to implementing programs in the IT/BPO sector.

Moreover, EFE-Egypt and J-PAL have piloted a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) as part of the Recruitment Study, in an attempt to explore new ways for participant recruitment. The RCT is comprised of an outreach campaign on Facebook with different messages (posts or advertisements boosted on Facebook) targeted at participants to measure the most effective language or pitch that generates the most leads for the training programs. In the meantime, EFE-Egypt has opted to conduct direct participant outreach via its social media channels, particularly Facebook as well, while simultaneously exploring new channels in collaboration with the J-PAL team.

EFE-Egypt and J-PAL have completed the Perceptions Study, which aims to understand youth perceptions and employer perceptions on the Egyptian labor market and its current state, needs and demands. The Perceptions Study addresses youth's challenges in entering the labor market, and employer challenges in finding competent hires in the private sector. A video has been produced to express youth and employer perceptions on the labor market and has been disseminated on YouTube and EFE-Egypt's Facebook page.

Finally, the team has launched a total of eleven cohorts of training programs to date, including a total of 20 classes, with a graduating total of 591 participants trained on IDRC-funded training curriculum.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

EFE-Egypt committed to the research questions outlined in the initial proposal and work plan. Such questions include: What skills and competencies are required to effectively train youth to meet labor market demands? What skills do youth need for continued career development? What employer and youth perceptions serve as significant obstacles to the employment of underprivileged youth in private companies? Which methods are most effective at recruiting youth for job training programs?

RESEARCH FINDINGS

To date, the project has derived research findings from the Market Skills and Competencies Study, and the Perceptions Study. The Recruitment Study, which aims to identify which methods and messages are most efficient for sourcing and recruiting youth for training programs, will be carried out by J-PAL. There have been significant delays in launching the Recruitment Study through Randomized Control Trials on Facebook, as there were still technical barriers regarding payment methods, and glitches on Facebook ads. Findings for the Perceptions Study are as seen below:

Perceptions Study

This section reports on the fourth objective of the research project defined as “Analyzing the perceptions that may obstruct marginalized youth access to the labor sector”. There were three main outputs outlined in the initial project proposal: (1) Analysis of data collected on employer perceptions, focusing on those that may affect underprivileged Egyptian youth access to employment opportunities, (2) Analysis of data collected on youth perceptions, and (3) Stakeholder engagement materials mobilizing knowledge on youth and employer perceptions, including a video developed to address these perceptions, which is currently being finalized.

(1) Employer Perceptions

To better understand how employer perceptions impact the labor market in Egypt, J-PAL added several questions to the “Market Skills and Competencies” survey that was implemented on nearly 1,000 firms across Egypt. This survey collected a variety of data from firms about the work they were doing, the type of establishment they were, details on their current personnel and their future personnel needs, and the types of skills they were looking for when they hire. At the end of the survey J-PAL added a few questions that were meant to dig a little deeper into labor market issues that are less well reported.

In particular, we asked three types of sensitive questions to get at employer perceptions. These questions were as follows:

- 1) When hiring a new employee, do you prefer to hire men over women?
- 2) When hiring a new employee, do you put more weight on their socioeconomic background relative to their skills?
- 3) Do you believe there is a lack of entry level job applicants with enough skills?

We asked the first two questions in two different ways. For half of the sample it was asked directly, by asking the question exactly as written above. For the other half of the sample it was asked indirectly, by utilizing a technique called a “list randomization”. The list randomization technique has surveyors provide some respondents with a list of 4 innocuous statements and asks them to report the number of statements that apply to themselves (not which statements are true, but how many of the 4). The other part of the technique provides another group of respondents with the same 4 innocuous statements and an additional sensitive fifth statement and again asks the respondent how many of the statements apply to them. Given the examples above the fifth statement for some people was “when hiring a new employee, I prefer to hire men over women”.

In other cases, people had a fifth statement that read “when hiring a new employee, I put more weight on socioeconomic background relative to their skills”.

Interestingly in the cases of these two sensitive questions we found a large proportion of firms admitting to these statements when asked directly. 67.9% of firms claimed to prefer to hire men over women and 41.3% claimed to care about socioeconomic status more than candidate skills. These numbers closely match the estimates that J-PAL obtained from the indirect list-randomization procedure, showcasing that not only do these firms discriminate in these ways that we normally believe are looked down upon in society, they are willing to admit to this type of discrimination openly.

J-PAL also wanted to see if the common reports of complaints from employers about a lack of skills amongst the entry-level labor force was their true views or potentially the result of leading questions. For this we randomized the question that we asked employers. Some were asked whether they “believe there is a lack of entry level job applicants with enough skills”, while others were asked the same question but it instead started with “Some employers complain that they cannot find works with appropriate skills”. J-PAL found that 35.1% of employers agreed with the direct question, which 39.6% agreed with the leading question. This shows that while leading a respondent to the answer you want can inflate numbers, there is still an underlying perception amongst employers that there are skill shortages in the entry-level labor market.

The final set of questions in the survey that provide information about employer perceptions involve the skills needed for key jobs and which of those skills are difficult to find. These questions tell us what skills unemployed youth lack – at least in the minds of employers – that keep them from getting jobs. Each firm was asked about the skill requirements for the main entry-level job in their sector: for restaurants, waiters; for hotels, front desk workers; for IT, junior developers; and for retail, salespeople and cashiers. Firms were given a list of skills that might be required for these jobs and then were asked two key questions: (1) What are the most important skills for this job? and (2) Which skills are hardest for you to find when looking for new employees? While there were many responses to these questions, we can look at the most common answers to find key patterns of how employers perceive their jobs and job-seekers.

In retail, firms emphasized that “soft” skills were the most important and the hardest to find in potential hires. Soft skills include people skills, emotional intelligence, and being honest and responsible. For instance, the four most common responses for the hardest skills to find in a salesperson were “Ability to deal with customers in a positive manner”, “Ability to work calmly under pressure”, “Ability to perceive a customer’s mood”, and “Showing up to work on time consistently”. Out of about 60 different skill options, 67.1% of firms said that one of these four skills was either the hardest or second-hardest skill to find. In addition, the sixth most common response was “Keeping accurate and honest records of transactions”. These results show us that in the retail sector, employers perceive that potential job-seekers lack the soft skills needed to deal well with customers and be a professional employee.

In IT, a more technologically demanding industry, employers noted that both soft and technical skills were hard to find. The most important skill, and also the hardest skill to find, was “Ability to learn new skills and programming languages”. This tells us that while employees need the skill to do programming, they also need the flexibility and work ethic to continue growing in their capabilities. Further, the second hardest skill to find was listed as “Ability to work in teams”. Thus, even in a technology-driven industry, people skills are extremely

important to employers.

In the hospitality sector, EGYPT surveyed hotels and restaurants. These are industries in which workers work closely with customers, and thus people-related skills ranked highly among the employer responses. If anything stands out among these results, it is the importance of language skills. Hotels' top three responses for hardest skills to find among front desk workers were speaking English, speaking English without an accent, and speaking other languages (besides English or Arabic). For these hotels, a well-qualified candidate who only speaks Arabic is not good enough. Similarly, restaurants also listed speaking English as the hardest skill to find among waiters. They also emphasized soft skills, with "Showing up to work on time consistently" and "Ability to solve unfamiliar problems" the second and third choices.

To summarize the skill results, then, we found that employers typically emphasize soft and language skills as the skills that are hardest to find in potential employers. In IT, technical skills matter more, but even there, interpersonal skills are important and difficult to find. Employers seem to perceive that many candidates who are well-qualified "on paper" lack these soft skills.

(2) Youth Perceptions

In understanding the barriers to employment in Egypt, the perceptions of youth are important as well. Anecdotal evidence suggests that unemployed youth may turn down open job opportunities because they feel that the jobs are dead-end jobs, do not offer enough prestige, or do not pay enough. Further, youth may not enroll in a training program because of stigma associated with "needing help" to find a job.

To explore these issues of youth perceptions about training programs and the labor market in detail, we are conducting a large-scale recruitment experiment in partnership with J-PAL. In the experiment, we recruit unemployed and under-employed young adults to the training program using a (randomized) variety of methods. These methods have varying degrees of success, and reveal some of the perceptions that young adults hold that influence their decision on whether or not to sign up for the training program.

We have found four main sets of factors that affect young adult behavior in this area. First, information costs are large. In other words, simply telling someone about the job training program dramatically increases their likelihood of applying and enrolling. We learned this by comparing the application and enrollment rates of youth who were told about our training programs, specifically with the rates of those who were only told in general terms about existing government training programs. The former group – the ones told about EFE-Egypt's training programs – were far more likely to apply than those who were not told about the programs. This result is not surprising, but it tells us that one key barrier to employment for young adults may be a lack of knowledge. They may not know about job opportunities, or about programs that can help them find jobs. Providing better information about these opportunities makes young adults much more likely to seek them.

Second, the price of training can directly affect youth perceptions of training program quality and their willingness to apply for the program. For a program like the EFE-Egypt training program, small monetary costs discourage applications considerably. However, offering small monetary incentives is ineffective and can even have a negative effect on application rates. In the experiment, we randomized the cost of the program for the participant. Some were offered it for free (0 Egyptian pounds), others were given a price of 100 or 200 Egyptian pounds, and some were given an incentive of 100 Egyptian pounds to sign up. All of these amounts are small

for a four to six-week training program, but the different costs had very different results for the likelihood of application.

The first thing we found is that charging people a positive price – compared to offering the program for free – has a large negative effect on application rates. Charging 100 Egyptian pounds reduced application rates by 35%. Interestingly, charging 200 Egyptian pounds did not reduce application rates any more than the 100-pound charge. Thus, we see that a free program is far more attractive to young adults than a program that charges anything, even a small amount. “Free” is an attractive quality for a training program, but beyond that, youth are not very cost-sensitive.

The second thing we found was that offering a 100-pound incentive led to slightly *lower* application rates than the free program. One reason why this might be the case is that participants assumed the program must be low-quality or not legitimate if it offered such a small incentive to sign up. Anecdotal evidence suggests to that there were many training programs that were little more than scams meant to get people to pay for useless courses and so many people are naturally cautious. Thus, the cost itself can affect perception of the quality of the program.

Our third major set of findings involves youth perceptions about the various types of stigma associated with training programs and entry-level jobs. We randomly varied the “pitch” given to the participant in the recruitment process. Several of these pitches were aimed at overcoming stigmas that we suspected might be keeping youth from having jobs or entering training programs. The first of these is “professional stigma”, which is the concern that entry-level jobs are dead-end jobs and do not give opportunities for advancement. The second type is “personal stigma”, which is the concern that entry-level jobs are unpleasant and unsatisfying. The third type is “social stigma”, which is the concern that entry-level jobs may be viewed negatively by family, friends, and potential spouses. Thus, a young adult (particularly a young man) seeking respect and good marriage prospects might rather remain unemployed and wait for the right job rather than seek training for an entry-level position.

EFE-Egypt and J-PAL designed a pitch to target each of these types of stigma. Each one involved testimonials from EFE-Egypt graduates and/or statistics designed to combat the negative stereotypes associated with that type of stigma.

Our results show two things: (1) that these stigmas are very real and that they affect youth’s likelihood of entering training, and (2) that attempts to overcome these stigmas are especially effective for wealthier potential applicants. For instance, for our participants from wealthier family backgrounds, giving a pitch designed to overcome stigma raised application rates by about 25%. For the less wealthy, the pitches had no such effect, sometimes even having a negative effect. This result is intuitive upon reflection. The wealthier applicants would be the ones most worried about these stigmas. They likely have higher standards and a higher importance of prestige. Thus, their aversion to an entry-level position is likely greater than the less wealthy. The results show that our pitches were successful in overcoming these stigmas. However, for the less wealthy, it is possible that our attempts to overcome stigmas only reinforced those stereotypes. These applicants may have seen the training program as a way to move up in the world, coming in with lower standards for acceptable jobs. By pointing out that “some people may think that these types of jobs might be looked down on in society” (as in one of our pitches), we may have planted a stigma in their minds that was

not there before the interaction.

Finally, we found an important “charity stigma” among potential applicants to the program. Some people were randomly told that the program is normally more expensive (4,000 EGP) but has been subsidized “for the needy”. This led to a negative effect on application rates, especially for the wealthier potential applicants. Thus, we see that some young adults do not want to be associated with a program that is designed for the poor. This is an important perception issue for any programs designed to help the less fortunate, including a training program for the unemployed.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

MARKET SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

As previously indicated in the Research Findings section, EFE-Egypt and J-PAL have collaboratively undertaken a large-scale MSC Study in the retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO sectors. The study has been done sequentially, starting with the retail sector, followed by hospitality, and finally, the IT/BPO sector. The aim of this research is to provide in-depth quantitative analysis of the skills and competencies required for core entry-level occupations.

Throughout Year 1, the team had identified the research entity, established the foundation for the research, and completed the qualitative research phase. However, significant delays in obtaining research approval from CAPMAS have further delayed the progress of the MSC Study. This phase was aimed at identifying the most in-demand occupations in the retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO sectors. Accordingly, employers voiced the following occupations as the most in-demand in each respective sector.

Sector	Occupations
Retail	Sales Associates, Cashiers
IT/BPO	IT Sales Associates, Web Developers
Hospitality	Waiters for restaurants and Front Desk Employees for hotels

Throughout year 2 the team continued to build on the progress made in the previous years by expanding research efforts in all three sectors. In year 3, in the previous reporting period, the MSC Study was complete, with over 1800 employers from the retail, hospitality and IT sectors interviewed.

The purpose of the study is to identify the specific skills and competencies per sector per occupation, and as such, to be able to develop training material accordingly and deliver programs that directly respond to market needs.

Retail:

Research in the retail sector generated findings that draw a clearer picture of the needs of the local labor market. For example, focusing on salespersons and cashiers, retail firms were asked to rate the skills as far as how important they were and how difficult they were to find. Research found that for salespersons, 30.8% of

respondents listed the ability to deal with customers in a positive manner as the most important skill and the hardest to find, while 13.0% of respondent reported the ability to keep accurate and honest records of transactions as the most important skill and the hardest to find. Meanwhile, for cashiers, research found that 50% of firms listed keeping accurate and honest record of transactions as the most important skill, while 23.5% listed the use of a cash register as the most important skill and the hardest to find.

Hospitality:

In May 2016, EgyPols launched the hospitality research with a variety of large and medium sized hotel chains in Egypt, including Helnan Hotels. Accordingly, the team identified the main core occupations in this sector as the following: Front Desk Employees for hotels and Waiters for restaurants

Furthermore, EgyPols designed the quantitative survey for the hospitality sector, and finalized it with support from the J-PAL team. The survey was then uploaded on the automated data collection system used by J-PAL. A total of 74 hospitality quantitative surveys for restaurants and 22 for hotels have been disseminated. Consequently, a full index of the most in-demand skills for the hospitality sector has been made available, upon which a relevant hospitality curriculum was developed.

IT/BPO:

With regard to the IT/BPO sector, the team embarked on the dissemination of quantitative surveys aimed at gaining a better understanding of the specific skills in demand for each occupation. In previous reporting periods, the team had identified IT Sales Associates, Web Developers, Technical Support, and Graphic Designers as main occupations and through a process of prioritization, the team identified IT Sales Associates and Web Developers as the two occupations to emphasize on. Accordingly, EgyPols has distributed a total of 115 surveys with a variety of IT employers including small, medium and large enterprises.

CONTINUED SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Alongside the MSC Study, EFE-Egypt is proud to report that it has developed the tools to communicate with its alumni network of over 5500 graduates to determine their needs. The objective of this component is to collect data from alumni to identify the skill gaps that EFE-Egypt demand. This supports the organization in expanding and tailoring alumni programming to address identified gaps.

During this period, EFE-Egypt has been effectively utilizing and benefiting from its alumni application, a mobile-based enabler aimed at facilitating communication between EFE-Egypt and its alumni community. The alumni application has been designed to include the following multifaceted functions:

- Showcasing tabular data of all potential job opportunities with their relevant data, including the option of applying for potential jobs online;
- Showcasing EFE-Egypt's calendar with monthly alumni activities and all pertaining details, including a brief synopsis of activities with their start and end date and exact times. It will also include the option of applying for activities via the application;

- Design and disseminate surveys pertaining to alumni continued skill development needs;
- Including log in functionality for each registered alumnus;
- Allowing clear communication channels between alumni and the administrator;

In doing so, alumni now have access to increased information regarding available job opportunities, upcoming courses and professional development opportunities organized by EFE-Egypt. Another key functionality of both online portal and the alumni application is the dissemination of surveys to youth. Surveys have been playing a critical role in collecting data from alumni to identify their demand for skills and opportunities. Such has continued to support EFE-Egypt in mapping out the gaps that the alumni community have, and thereby expand its alumni programming to respond to such gaps.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS

With the support of IDRC, EFE-Egypt had planned to implement a total of 52 Job Placement Training Programs (JPTP's), thereby targeting a total of 1,300 underprivileged Egyptian youth over the entire duration of the project. The initial plan was for EFE-Egypt to implement a total of 13 Programs in Year 1, with implementation beginning in July 2016, with all other remaining programs launching in the following two years. However, delays in obtaining research approvals during years 1 and 2 as well as outreach challenges in year 3 have delayed implementation.

Over the past years, the team had initially planned to enroll participants from the Recruitment Study to be trained in the class. However, elaborated in the previous report and will be reiterated further, both J-PAL and EFE-Egypt experienced challenges in attracting large numbers of youth to enroll in EFE-Egypt's training programs.

Challenges were also faced in sourcing participants for the hospitality programs, as well as getting employer buy-ins from that sector. As EFE-Egypt uses Facebook as its main outreach channel, blue-collar workers were difficult to source from Facebook. As such, the team has moved and implemented programs for the IT/BPO sector, particularly Graphic Design, which has garnering great interest from youth.

Figure A: A student presents her graduation project at the graduation ceremony



To support in the design of effective and efficient employment training programs, EFE-Egypt has utilized the findings of the aforementioned Market Skills and Competencies Study to develop sector-specific curriculum for IT/BPO, as accomplished before for the retail and hospitality sectors. Sector-specific curricula draw on EFE-Egypt's currently existing in-house curriculums, and includes updated high quality participant material, trainer guides, learning objectives, and course outlines. Similar to the Market Skills and Competencies

Study, curriculum development has taken place sequentially – starting with the retail sector, hospitality sector, then the IT/BPO sector. The curriculum development process for the retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO sectors has been completed, and data-driven curriculum has been produced and implemented during the past years as previously reported, with three different reiterations of retail and IT/BPO curricula developed. Nine market-driven retail classes and two IT/BPO classes have been implemented to date. No hospitality classes were launched due to the aforementioned recruitment challenges. Training programs in the IT/BPO sector have begun in April 2018 and are currently active.

In parallel with curriculum development, EFE-Egypt's newly appointed Partnerships and Communications Manager has been and will continue reaching out to potential employer partners in the private sector to facilitate job placements for EFE-Egypt graduates. Corporate outreach has been ongoing over the past years, and will continue with greater emphasis until the completion of the youth employment programs. For participant outreach and recruitment, EFE-Egypt will be leveraging the findings of the IDRC-funded Recruitment Study.

Figure B: Cohort 6 students during their graduation ceremony

To measure the effectiveness of the training programs, EFE-Egypt is recruiting four classes but only implementing three, with the remaining one allotted as the control group which will not be trained. As such, each cohort for every targeted sector comprises of three classes, with each class allotted a different program; one class would be trained on soft skills, which are general skills deemed usable beyond a specific job, one on technical skills, skills that are only relevant to a specific job,



and one on a combined set of skills (soft and technical). Outreach for such a substantial amount of participants at one time has been a quite challenging and lengthy process, however, outreach efforts begin relatively early to secure approximately 100 participants at once.

For the participants allotted in the control group, EFE-Egypt ensures to not exclude them from potential development opportunities by having them participate in alumni courses as compensation, free of charge. Courses conducted in the past include English Conversation and Graphic Design. EFE-Egypt also keeps a database of these participants and contacts them after one year has passed since their assigning in the control group, and offers them places in other training programs funded by other donors.

EFE-Egypt has been monitoring the progress of all its participants via its Monitoring and Evaluation System (M&E System) throughout the entire year as done in the past, and will continue sharing the results and progress of the Programs with J-PAL on a regular basis. As such, EFE-Egypt will support J-PAL in carrying out the impact evaluation testing the effectiveness and efficiency of different employment training programs. Statistics of progress to date is as seen in the table below:

IDRC Training Program Statistics		
Total Cohorts	11 cohorts	
Total enrolled	651	
Total graduates	591	
Total Soft Skills graduates	219	37.44% employed
Total Combined graduates	165	51.35% employed

Total Technical graduates	207	47.85% employed
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These placement rates are pending changes as more M&E calls are to be conducted after 3 months of each cohort passes up until one year. Some classes have only recently graduated and thus M&E calls are still pending for the participants of these classes. Moreover, during the last reporting period, EFE-Egypt was gravely understaffed, due to delays in obtaining governmental approvals for pending grants. As such, recruitment activities were carried out by only one staff member, as there were no funds available to hire more personnel. As of early October 2018, these approvals have been granted, and EFE-Egypt has hired more personnel in this department to improve the employment rate.

Another initiative that has been taken since July 2018 to improve the placement rates was the establishment of the Employment Day. The Employment Day takes place at EFE-Egypt's premises after the program ends. Employers from different sectors are invited to participate and meet youth for interviews. This has greatly enhanced placement rates across all training programs.

A comprehensive breakdown of each cohort as well as their start and end dates is seen on the following table:

Cohort 1		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	68	
Total # of graduates	67	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	16	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	52	
Start date	13/11/2016	
Enddate	27/12/2016	
Cohort 2		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	63	
Total # of graduates	54	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	21	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	42	
Start date	26/01/2017	
End date	17/03/2017	
Cohort 3		
Total classes completed	2	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	38	
Total # of graduates	34	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	20	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	18	
Start date	14/04/2017	

End date	21/05/2017	
Cohort 4		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	80	
Total # of graduates	72	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	28	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	52	
Start date	16/07/2017	
End date	20/08/2017	
Cohort 5		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	64	
Total # of graduates	59	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	11	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	53	
Start date	4/10/2017	
End date	8/11/2017	
Cohort 6		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	62	
Total # of graduates	60	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	21	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	41	
Start date	12/2/2018	
End date	6/3/2018	
Cohort 7		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	63	
Total # of graduates	59	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	21	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	42	
Start date	5/4/2018	
End date	14/05/2018	
Cohort 8		
Total classes completed	2	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	36	
Total # of graduates	30	

Total # of male participants (enrolled)	12	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	24	
Start date	21/05/2018	
End date	20/06/2018	
Cohort 9		
Total classes completed	3	Retail
Total # of participants (enrolled)	52	
Total # of graduates	50	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	17	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	35	
Start date	16/07/2018	
End date	8/8/2018	
Cohort 10		
Total classes completed	3	Graphic Design (Photoshop)
Total # of participants (enrolled)	49	
Total # of graduates	46	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	21	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	28	
Start date	5/8/2018	
End date	6/9/2018	
Cohort 11		
Total classes completed	3	Graphic Design (Photoshop)
Total # of participants (enrolled)	62	
Total # of graduates	60	
Total # of male participants (enrolled)	22	
Total # of female participants (enrolled)	40	
Start date	8/10/2018	
End date	1/11/2018	

Note: An extension request for this grant was submitted by EFE-Egypt to IDRC in September 2018, and was denied in February 2019. As such, EFE-Egypt is unable to proceed with programmatic activities and meet initial targets.

RECRUITMENT STUDY

Alongside the MSC Study and the preparation for the implementation of JPTP's, EFE-Egypt has been working closely with J-PAL to launch the project's Recruitment Study. As EFE-Egypt scales up its operations, it aims to

utilize the most effective mechanisms for participant recruitment. As such, the goal of this study is to identify how to better select and target youth from marginalized groups, including women.

As previously iterated in the previous reports, J-PAL have designed a research methodology for this study that tests the impact of different recruitment pitches on potential beneficiaries. Those are designed to focus on different aspects of the employment and training experience.

Alongside the aforementioned Randomized Control Trial on Facebook, EFE-Egypt is currently working on its own in-house participant outreach and recruitment through boosted and paid advertisements on our Facebook page.

Upon boosting advertisements on EFE-Egypt's Facebook page and receiving responses, potential applicants are invited to attend an information session via SMS. An information session (info session) introduces youth to the organization and its programs to address the general public's basic questions as well as to provide them with a "familiar face" to discuss any doubts and raise any issues they may have when deciding whether or not to join the program. This decision came after many youths expressed the lack of trust typically linked to NGOs, especially NGOs working in youth employment and even more, those who promise linking them to employment opportunities. Youth were then invited to register for the program by paying a nominal commitment fee of EGP 150. When 100 participants had paid and registered, EFE-Egypt moves on to send their names and mobile numbers to J-PAL so as to proceed with the randomization of each group as per the Randomized Control Trial methodology that they are carrying out to conduct an impact evaluation on EFE-Egypt's programs. Thus, youth were assigned either to a soft skills program, a technical skills program, a combined program or to the control group.

Before training program commencement, participants are required to sign a "JPTP Participant Contract" to authorize sharing of information with EFE-Egypt and donor partners, as well as to authorize taking and disseminating photographs during training programs and in graduation ceremonies for promotional purposes. This ensures that EFE-Egypt respects participants information and takes adequate measures to operate ethically as we share data with J-PAL.

PERCEPTION STUDY

In efforts of better understanding youth and employer perceptions, EFE-Egypt and J-PAL have integrated perception-related questions in the aforementioned studies, namely the Market Skills and Competencies and the Recruitment Study. For the purpose of better understanding employer perceptions, EFE-Egypt and J-PAL have ensured that perception-related questions are integrated into the Market Skills and Competencies Study. By analyzing youth and employer's responses to such questions, EFE-Egypt and J-PAL gained a greater understanding of perceptions and will accordingly customize positioning of programs and outreach efforts. Findings of the perception study have been generated in the reporting period at hand, and are detailed in the "Research Findings" section.

Moreover, EFE-Egypt has identified and contracted a Video Producer who developed a video addressing youth and employer perceptions, wherein findings of the Market Skills and Competencies Study and the Recruitment

Study to date are shared. By sharing the findings of the studies, as well as the personal perceptions of the youth and employer subjects, EFE-Egypt ensures that the videos draw upon real-life examples and research findings.

The video can be found through this link: <https://www.facebook.com/EFEgypt/videos/2272534696310529/>

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

As part of the project's knowledge mobilization strategy, EFE-Egypt has delivered a capacity building workshop to Career Development Centers (CDC's) at the Nahda University in Beni Suef in May 15th 2018. The workshop revolved around tackling issues such as the skill mismatch, information asymmetries, perceptions, and innovation solutions to youth unemployment, including tools required to secure a job.

Alongside the aforementioned project tracks, EFE-Egypt will be leveraging the data and knowledge generated through the project to actively engage various stakeholders. By ensuring a solid channel of communication, EFE-Egypt will leverage project findings to best address the needs of relevant stakeholders.

PROJECT OUTPUTS AND DISSEMINATION

Output	Status	Notes
Employer survey and analysis of market-demanded skills and competencies in three target sectors: retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO	<i>Completed</i>	All survey design and analysis for retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO sectors completed.
Analysis of data collected on employer perceptions, focusing on those that may affect underprivileged Egyptian youth access to employment opportunities	<i>Completed</i>	Perceptions study completed and results shared by J-PAL
Data collection and analysis of continued skill development from EFE alumni	<i>Completed, on-going</i>	Surveys are periodically posted on EFE-Egypt's online portal and mobile application
Curriculum development for retail, hospitality, and IT/BPO to deliver sector-specific, employment-driven training programs	<i>Completed</i>	EFE-Egypt completed the curriculum development for all three sectors

Piloted variations of sector-specific training programs for three sectors utilizing a variety of soft and technical skill combinations	<i>Completed</i>	Retail sector programs launched. Hospitality has been omitted from the program. IT/BPO launched.
An experimental study measuring the impact of different employment training program designs and their cost-effectiveness, written for submission to a peer-reviewed journal	<i>Due to take place throughout full duration of the project</i>	To be delivered by J-PAL
Analysis of data collected on youth perceptions	<i>Completed</i>	As part of the perceptions study
Stakeholder engagement materials mobilizing knowledge on youth and employer perceptions, including a video developed to address these perceptions	<i>Completed</i>	Video has been produced and finalized
Data research findings presentations at annual EFE Summit	<i>Completed</i>	EFE-Egypt successfully delivered its affiliate presentation, inclusive IDRC's data findings at its annual meeting in Amman on April 3, 2017.
Workshops, webinars, and online mechanisms targeting youth training practitioners	<i>April 2019</i>	To be delivered by EFE-Egypt
Knowledge sharing and capacity building workshops with a public university Career Development Center	<i>Partially completed, April 2019</i>	A capacity building workshop has been conducted in Beni Suef by EFE-Egypt in May 2018. Another workshop was due to take place but was halted due to the denial of the extension requested.

Briefs summarizing main findings from research tailored for different youth employment stakeholders available online		To be delivered by J-PAL